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ASSESSING LOCAL PARKS FOR THEIR INFRASTRUCTURE, ISSUES, AND USE

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Assessing Local Parks for their Infrastructure, Issues, and Use

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ABSTRACT

This research project assessed public park physical activity infrastructure use in Richmond and Columbia Counties. Prior research has shown that children not only enjoy outdoor time, but also consider parks as a place for socializing. Furthermore, research has shown that playground time positively impacts children's imagination. The playground also aids in the physical fitness of children by offering interactive experiences that can add to the recommended 60 minutes of physical activity a day. Park assessments were conducted utilizing the Physical Activity Resource Assessment (PARA) Tool and found that overall, parks in both counties were well taken care of. Additionally, there was a wide variety of amenities available to utilize. There were some areas of concern in the parks, however, including cigarette buds, alcohol containers, trash, and cracked sidewalks. In both counties, parks were observed to see how much children utilized the playground equipment. Observations concluded that the majority of children utilized the different variety of equipment, with the swings and slides being the most common. In conclusion, this presentation will describe the diversity of amenities, challenges in maintenance, and the overall use of public parks in both Richmond and Columbia Counties.

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